

Marketing Mix as Determinant of Sustainability of Small-Scale Business in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The study investigated the influence of marketing mix on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study had four objectives and four null hypotheses. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The entire 134 management staff of 187 registered Small-scale business in Alkaleri were used for the study. Structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from participants. Three experts validated the instrument before subjecting it pilot test. The result of pilot test yields a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.78. Four research assistants helps the researchers in the data collection. The data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), 23 to run Simple Linear Regression for the test of research hypotheses. The hypotheses were tested at the significant level of 0.05. The findings revealed that product, price, promotion and place have significant and positive influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkaleri metropolis. It was therefore concluded that inability of integrating marketing mix will affect sustainability of small-scale business. The study recommended among others that management and proprietors of small scale business in Alkaleri should integrates the various product variables like price, quality, branding, trademark and names.

Keywords: Marketing, Mix, Sustainability, Small-Scale, Business

1. Introduction

The definition of small-scale business differs within the fixed co-ordination of national boundaries and even within the same nation. Chaudhry, Ali, Fareed and Fakher (2014) reported that 75 different countries developed over 50 different definitions of small firms. Alaye-Ogan, (2012) defined small scale as business enterprise with capital base between twenty thousand naira and thirty million naira. Globally, Small scale business plays a significant role on job creation, income generation and development of individuals and nations at large. The study conducted by Aruwa (2006) reported that Small and Medium Scale Business provides employment of 80% in Japan, 50% at Germany and 46% in USA. Similarly, Dasanayaka (2009) also reported that Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) generate 75% and 80% employment in Sri Lanka and Pakistan respectively. Hall et al, (2010) maintained that, the economics of both developed and developing countries largely based on the activities of small-scale business. This explained why Baumann-Pauly et al, (2013) opined that small scale business plays a key role in shifting the society towards a more sustainable future.

In Nigeria, Ojo (2009) observed that small-scale industry plays a significant role on developing domestic economy through the provision of employment, generation of goods and services that propels the economy of country. Ojeka and Atawodi (2012) reported that Small business employed 50% of the Nigerian populace. Similarly, the study of Shehu et al., (2013) indicated that Small Scale Business provide about 97% of the total economy of the country. The following assertions suggested that small scale business serves as a source of job creation, income generation and economic for the developing of any country.

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Despite the contributions of small-scale business, it was observed that there is high rate of small scale business mortality in Nigeria. Empirical study from Adamu, Sara and Sagir (2018) reported that small scale business owned by beneficiaries of graduates of Technical and Vocational Training Centers hardly continue operation beyond 6 to 7 years. Similarly, the study conducted by Anas, Adamu and Bala (2019) revealed that there is problem of business sustainability in the country. The authors added that, most 80% of small and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria hardly sustain beyond 5 to 10 years. Consequently, Obiwuru, Okwu, Akpa and Nwankwere (2011) reported that the high rate of mortality rate of small scale business has trigger unemployment in the country, fall in standard of living which affects personal and national economy.

The mortality rate of small scale business as triggered many scholars to find out the causes of the unwelcome situation. To this end, the study conducted by Owomoyela, Olanokunmi, Oyeniye (2013) maintained that, the problem of small scale business is their inability to integrate marketing mix. Also the study of Mbugua (2013) reported inability of adopting marketing mix affects the growth of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises. Similarly, Lampadarios (2016) reported that, the major factor affects sustainability of small business is inability of adapting appropriate marketing mix. Likewise, Grene (2017) attributed the mortality of small scale business to inability of integrating the benefit of marketing mix among the proprietors. The author added that, marketing mix are lasting panacea for sustainability and growth of small scale business.

Marketing mix according to Riaz (2011) is set of controllable marketing tools that a business uses to create a desired response in the targeted market. Ghouri, Khan, Malik, and Razzaq (2011) asserts that effective implementation of marketing mix increase sales, performance and competitive advantage for business sustainability. Marketing mix interrelated actions and solutions to meet consumer needs and to achieve the company's marketing goals as a whole". Marketing mix according to Rotich (2016) are the 4P's (Product, Price, Promotion and Place) that helps in promoting business turnover and sustainable competitive advantage in business environment.

Previous studies have shown that effective utilization of marketing mix has the potential of improving sales and enhancing business sustainability. The study of Owomoyela, Olanokunmi, Oyeniye (2013) shows that quality product, packaging affording price, promotion and effective distribution promotes sustainability and competitive business environment. The author further argued that price is one of the factors influence consumer decision which enhances business profitability and sustainability. In the same lane, the study of Martin (2014) reported that place as significant role on consumers' satisfaction, business sales volume and business growth and continuity. Pranulis, Pajuodis, Urbonavicius, Virvilaitė (2012) argued that promotion is a complex element that enhance sales volume, business profitability, growth and development of businesses. Saguti (2015) opined that effective marketing mix can create and improve sales of business. Similarly, Lampadarios (2016) reported that, adoption of appropriate marketing mix will help in the business growth and development. According to Mustapha, (2017), adopting of effective marketing mix strategies has positive role on realization of organizational goals. Grene (2017) also argued that, integration marketing mix in business environment is the panacea for sustainability and growth of small scale business. The citations prompted the researchers to: (i) determine the influence of product on sustainability of small scale business; (2) assess the influence of price on sustainability of small scale business; (3) ascertain the influence of promotion on sustainability of small scale business; and (4) find out the influence of place on sustainability of small scale business in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

2. Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- HO₁:** Product has no significant influence on sustainability of small scale business in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria?
- HO₂:** Price has no significant influence on sustainability of small scale business in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria?
- HO₃:** Promotion has no significant influence on sustainability of small scale business in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria.
- HO₄:** Place has no significant influence on sustainability of small scale business in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

3. Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey. The design deals with the relationship between variables, testing of hypothesis and development of generalizations and use of theories that have universal validity (Adamu & Sani, 2016). The author stressed that descriptive survey research design is the most appropriate design when study involve soliciting the opinions, attitudes, characteristics and beliefs of group of people through the use of questionnaire. Base on the foregoing, the design was considered appropriate since the study intends to collect the opinions of the respondents through questionnaires.

The population of this study was 134 management staff of 187 registered Small-Scale Business in Alkaleri Metropolis of Bauchi state. The management staff include the proprietors and the managers of the small scale business in the study area. The population is manageable, hence the entire population of 134 staff were used for the study. The

decision was based on suggestion of Creswell (2011) who opined that when the population is small, the researcher may wish to use the entire population for the study.

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The choice of questionnaire was based on suggestion of Gall and Borg (1996) who points out that, questionnaire should be employed when study involve collection of data about the attitudes, experience, feelings, behaviours, motivation and accomplishments of individuals. They author added that questionnaire have the added advantage of being less costly and time savings. The researchers adapted the instrument from previous studies as suggested by Kabir and Adamu (2019) opined that researcher can adopt or adapt instrument when his study and previous students were found to be similar or closely related. Based on this suggestion, the researchers adapted the instrument from the studies of Ade, Adekunle and Adekunle (2012); Moula (2017); Chukwuma and Nnabuko (2018); Sondin (2019). The instrument was structured in 4-points rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), 4 points; Agree (A), 3 points; Disagree (D), 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD), 1.

The instrument was validated by three experts and subjected to pilot study using 40 management staff of registered small-scale business in Kirfi local government area of Bauchi state. The data collected from the pilot study were entered into Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS), 25. The package used to run Cronbach Alpha reliability test as suggested by Madiha and Walid (2016) who reported the best tool to measure internal consistency of a questionnaire is Cronbach's alpha. The instrument yields a reliability coefficient of 0.78. The instrument was found to be reliable as recommended by Madiha and Walid (2016) who opined that a reliability coefficient of ≥ 0.7 should be considered reliable for a survey study. Based on this, the instrument was used for the study.

The researchers with the help of three research collected the data from the respondents. Direct approach was adopted for the data collection. The approach was considered appropriated because it enabled the researchers or research assistants to thoroughly explained the purpose, importance and confidentiality of all information to the respondents (Adamu & Kabir, 2019). The authors added that, direct approach has the advantage of retrieving higher percentage of completed copies of the questionnaire. The exercise is expected to last for 4 weeks. The data collected were fed into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, 25). The package was used to run descriptive statistics of mean scores and standard deviations used to answer the research questions. Inferential statistics of Simple Linear Regression was employed in the test of research hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

4. Results

The results of the study are as presented in Table 1 to 4

H0₁: Product has no significant influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria

The regression analysis for the test of null hypothesis one in Table 1 revealed the Standardized Coefficients Beta of .230 which was found to be the same with the R-value. The $t=2.6335$ with R-square of .053. The obtained R-square value suggests that the independent variable has 5.3% influence on the dependent variable. The p -value obtained was less than the alpha value ($.000 < 0.05$), the result indicated that the influence of produce on sustainability of SSB. was significant. The hypothesis was not retained.

Table 1: Linear Regression Result on the Influence of Product on SSSB in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria

Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
.230	2.633	.230	.053	.045	.010

H0₂: Price has no significant influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkaleri, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

The regression analysis on the test of hypothesis two in Table 2 disclosed the Standardized Coefficients Beta coefficient of .351 with $t=4.179$ and R-value was .351. The R-square of .123 obtained suggests that Prince has 12.3% influence on sustainability of SSB. The $p=.000$ was less than 0.05 level of significance. The obtained p -value indicated that price significantly influenced the sustainability of SSB in Alkaleri, Bauchi State. The null hypothesis was not retained.

Table 2: Linear Regression Result on the Influence of Price on SSSB in Alkalari, Bauchi State, Nigeria

Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
.351	4.179	.351	.123	.116	.000

H0₃ Promotion has no significant influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkalari, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

The finding of hypothesis three in Table 3 disclosed the Standardized Coefficients Beta value of .200 with equivalent R-value. The $t=2.265$ with R-square of .040. The obtained .040 indicated that Promotion has 4% influence on the sustainability of SSB. The *p-value* was less than the level of significance ($.025 < 0.05$), the result indicated that the influence of promotion on sustainability of SSB in Alkalari, Bauchi state was significance. The null hypothesis was therefore not retained.

Table 3: Linear Regression Result on the Influence of Promotion on SSSB in Alkalari, Bauchi State, Nigeria

Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
.200	2.265	.200	.040	.032	.025

H0₄ Place has no significant influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkalari, Bauchi State, Nigeria

The regression analysis in Table 4 revealed the Standardized Coefficients Beta value of .370 with $t=4.430$ and R-value was .370. The R-square value of .137 suggests that place 13.7% influence on sustainability of SSB in Alkalari in Bauchi state. The *p-value* was less than 0.05 level of significance. The result indicated that place has significance influence on sustainability of SSB in Alkalari, Bauchi State, Nigeria. The hypothesis was therefore not retained.

Table 4: Linear Regression Result on the Influence of Place on SSSB in Alkalari, Bauchi State, Nigeria

Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
.370	4.430	.370	.137	.130	.000

5. Discussion of the Findings

The findings of research hypothesis two revealed that product has a significant and positive influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkalari metropolis. The finding is consistent with Ferri, Mohd, Radiah and Hamidreza (2012) that on the Impact of innovation in distribution channel functions on firm performance, particularly among export-oriented, agro-based small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is under researched. The finding was also supported by Hassan et al (2016), opined that product has a positive relationship with purchasing decision which resulted to sustainability of the small-scale business.

The finding of hypothesis two indicated that price has significant influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkalari metropolis. The findings concurred with arguments in the existing literature, such as studies of Imoleayo (2010) that price has a significant influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkalari metropolis. The finding is also supported by the study Ade, Adekunle and Adekunle (2012) which indicated that marketing mix has positive role on the marketing practices of small businesses in Nigeria. Similar findings were reported Obonyo (2013) the effect of marketing strategies on business performance of small and medium enterprises remains elusive, even despite an established research tradition.

The finding of null hypothesis three revealed that place has a positive and significant influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkalari Metropolis. This is supported by Nurdin, Hardius and Zainul (2017) provide useful information for policy maker and business manager to formulate suitable marketing strategies to enhance the potential of sharia hotels in Indonesia. The finding also agreed with the study of Mustapha (2017) that also shows the importance of the marketing strategy no matter how small the Business may be. The finding was also supported by Gumel (2019)

indicate to ensure that business cope with the changing marketing environment, the development and implementation of appropriate marketing strategies cannot be overestimated.

The outcome of research hypothesis four reveal a significant and positive influence of promotion on sustainability of small scale business. The finding is consistent with the argument of the prior studies such as Kartikasari, Irham and Mulyo (2018) whose previous study reported that advertisement, effective distribution, pricing, hygienic environment, and marketing segmentation are very essentials for business performance. The findings are in line with the finding of Chukwuma and Nnabuko (2018) the study revealed that advertising does not significantly affect the sales volume of small and medium scale bakery firms in South East of Nigeria.

6. Conclusion

The study disclosed that product, price, promotion and place has positive influence on sustainability of small-scale business in Alkalari. It therefore means that any small scale business that adopted policies of integrating marketing mix will reap the advantages of success and sustainability over its competitors. Consequently, these will help to accelerate the expansion of profitability of such business. It was therefore concluded that growth and development of small scale business will be affected by inability of integrating marketing mix by its proprietors.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

- i. Management and proprietors of small scale business in Alkalari should consider the various product variables like quality, features, styles, brand names, and marks.
- ii. Moderate pricing policy should be adopted by business proprietors to gain competitive advantage of small-scale business over others.
- iii. Management of small scale business in Alkalari should adoption of effective and persuasive advertisement activities will influence business and its sustainability.
- iv. Small scale proprietors should ensure of their business is located in attractive and safety place that will attract customers.

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